SO...

SO WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

THE WITCH OF KURIKUTO

IN THE NEW AGE

Part I
Perfect Society

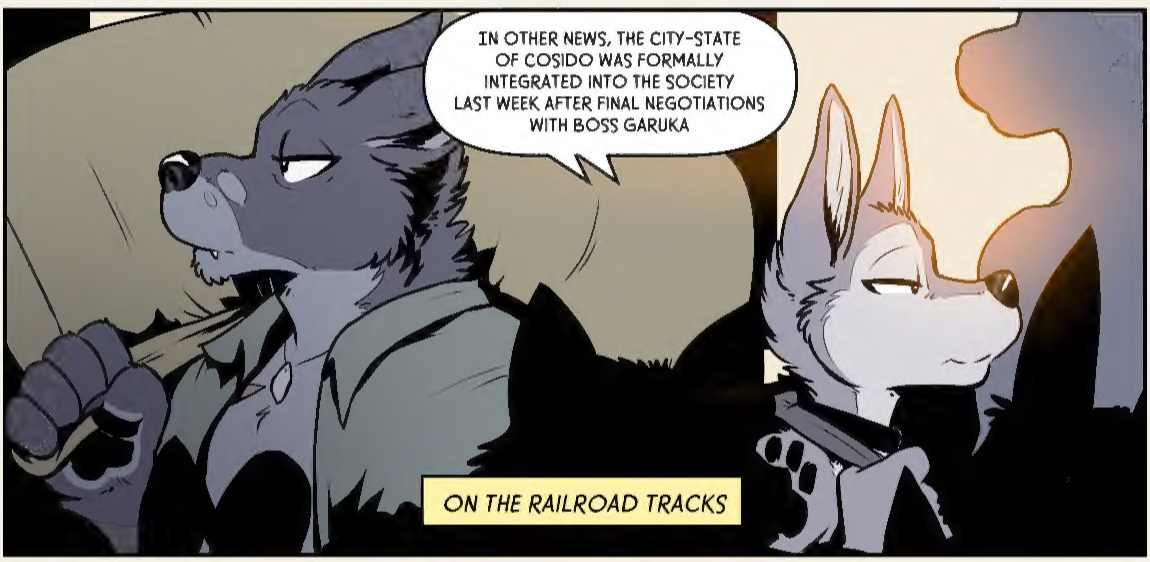
By Rick Griffin
Colors by Jonas

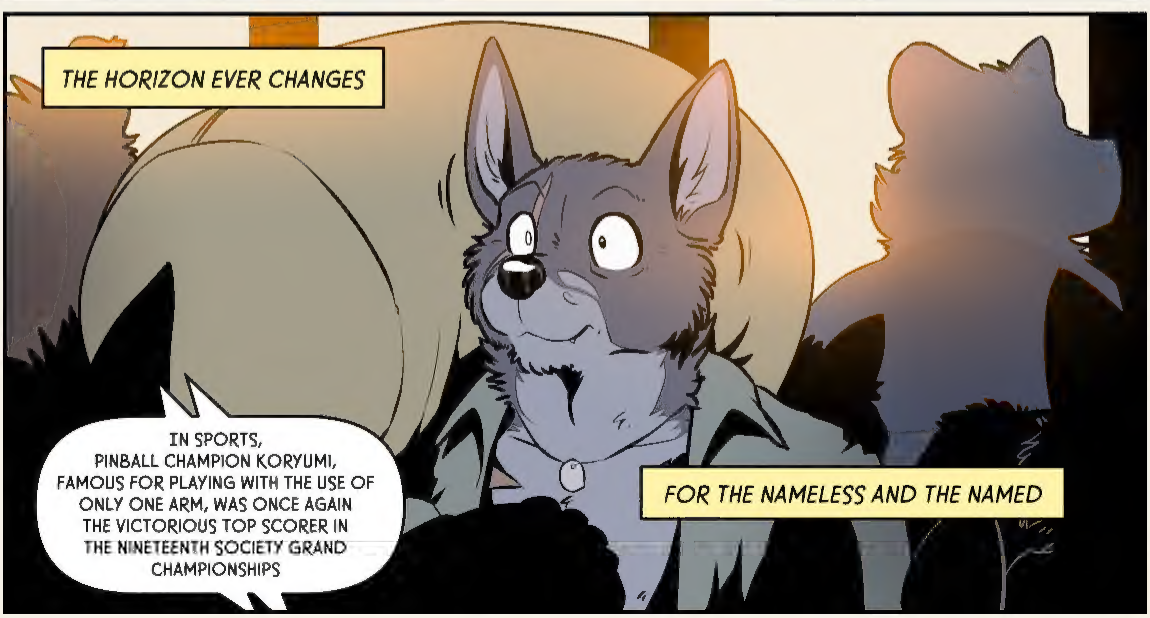
AND DID YOU CONFUSE
THE TRUTH FOR A RUSE
YOUR THOUGHTS FOR A GEAS
ARRIVING AT **LUSKA, NORTHRUN TERRITORY,** PLEASE ENSURE YOU HAVE COLLECTED ALL PERSONAL ITEMS BEFORE DISEMBARKING.
YOU HAVE FIFTEEN MINUTES UNTIL OUR NEXT DEPARTURE.
OR THE SPIRITS FOR FLESH
A COLD BITTER NIGHT
FOR A LOVER'S EMBRACE

MERE VISIONS FOR SIGHT
A ROAD FOR THE RACE
PURE LOVE FOR A BITE
A SHADE FOR A FACE

MERE VISIONS FOR SIGHT
A ROAD FOR THE RACE
PURE LOVE FOR A BITE
A SHADE FOR A FACE

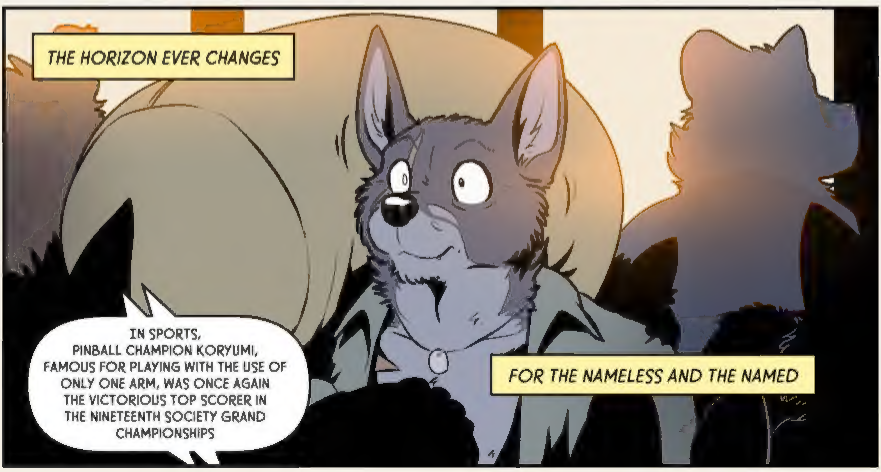
I...
I JUST WANT YOU BACK
REPARATIONS SUMMIT WITH YEHAUSHU-RO BROKE DOWN YESTERDAY EVENING WHEN AMBASSADOR ILDIRAKI WAS ACCUSED OF ESPIONAGE
BUT WE'RE DANCING 'ROUND FOREVER


IN OTHER NEWS, THE CITY-STATE OF COSIDO WAS FORMALLY INTEGRATED INTO THE SOCIETY LAST WEEK AFTER FINAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH BOSS GARUKA
ON THE RAILROAD TRACKS

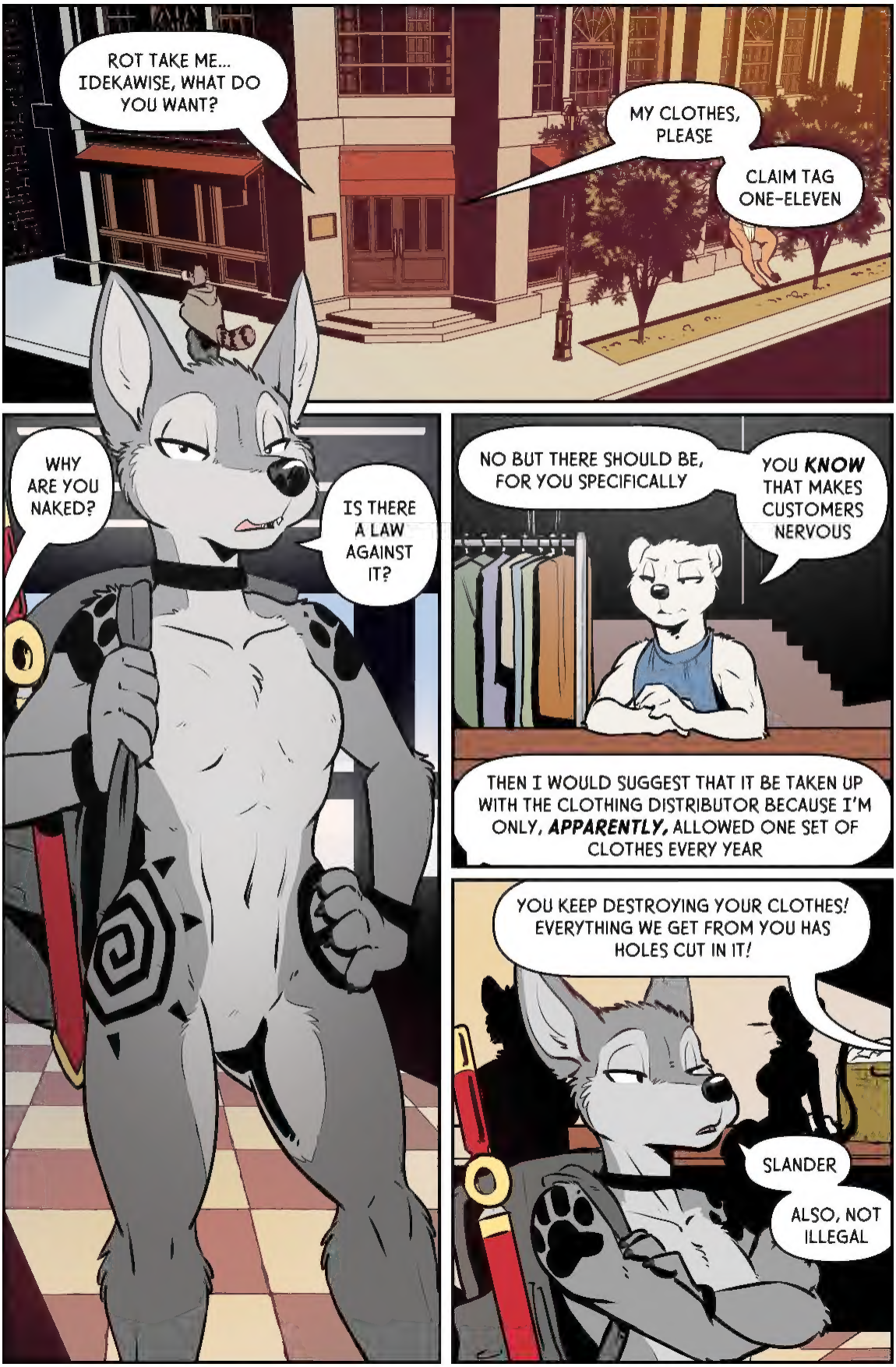

THE HORIZON EVER CHANGES
IN SPORTS, PINBALL CHAMPION KORYUMI, FAMOUS FOR PLAYING WITH THE USE OF ONLY ONE ARM, WAS ONCE AGAIN THE VICTORIOUS TOP SCORER IN THE NINETEENTH SOCIETY GRAND CHAMPIONSHIPS
FOR THE NAMELESS AND THE NAMED

I...
I JUST WANT YOU BACK
REPARATIONS SUMMIT WITH YEHAUSHU-RO BROKE DOWN YESTERDAY EVENING WHEN AMBASSADOR ILDIRAKI WAS ACCUSED OF ESPIONAGE
BUT WE'RE DANCING 'ROUND FOREVER

IN OTHER NEWS, THE CITY-STATE OF COSIDO WAS FORMALLY INTEGRATED INTO THE SOCIETY LAST WEEK AFTER FINAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH BOSS GARUKA
ON THE RAILROAD TRACKS


THE HORIZON EVER CHANGES
IN SPORTS, PINBALL CHAMPION KORYUMI, FAMOUS FOR PLAYING WITH THE USE OF ONLY ONE ARM, WAS ONCE AGAIN THE VICTORIOUS TOP SCORER IN THE NINETEENTH SOCIETY GRAND CHAMPIONSHIPS
FOR THE NAMELESS AND THE NAMED

I CAN'T EXPLAIN
WHAT IT IS I LACK
I JUST WANT YOU BACK


ROT TAKE ME... IDEKAWISE, WHAT DO YOU WANT?
MY CLOTHES, PLEASE
CLAIM TAG ONE-ELEVEN
WHY ARE YOU NAKED?
IS THERE A LAW AGAINST IT?
NO BUT THERE SHOULD BE, FOR YOU SPECIFICALLY
YOU KNOW THAT MAKES CUSTOMERS NERVOUS
THEN I WOULD SUGGEST THAT IT BE TAKEN UP WITH THE CLOTHING DISTRIBUTOR BECAUSE I'M ONLY, APPARENTLY, ALLOWED ONE SET OF CLOTHES EVERY YEAR
YOU KEEP DESTROYING YOUR CLOTHES! EVERYTHING WE GET FROM YOU HAS HOLES CUT IN IT!
SLANDER
ALSO, NOT ILLEGAL

PULL HER CLOTHES RIGHT NOW
BUT THEY'RE NOT EVEN--
JUST DO IT! IF SHE WANTS THEM DRY SHE CAN HANG HERSELF
ER, HANG THEM HERSELF
SEE? THEY'RE FINE
I'D APPRECIATE IT IF YOU DIDN'T GO THROWING ACCUSATIONS AROUND

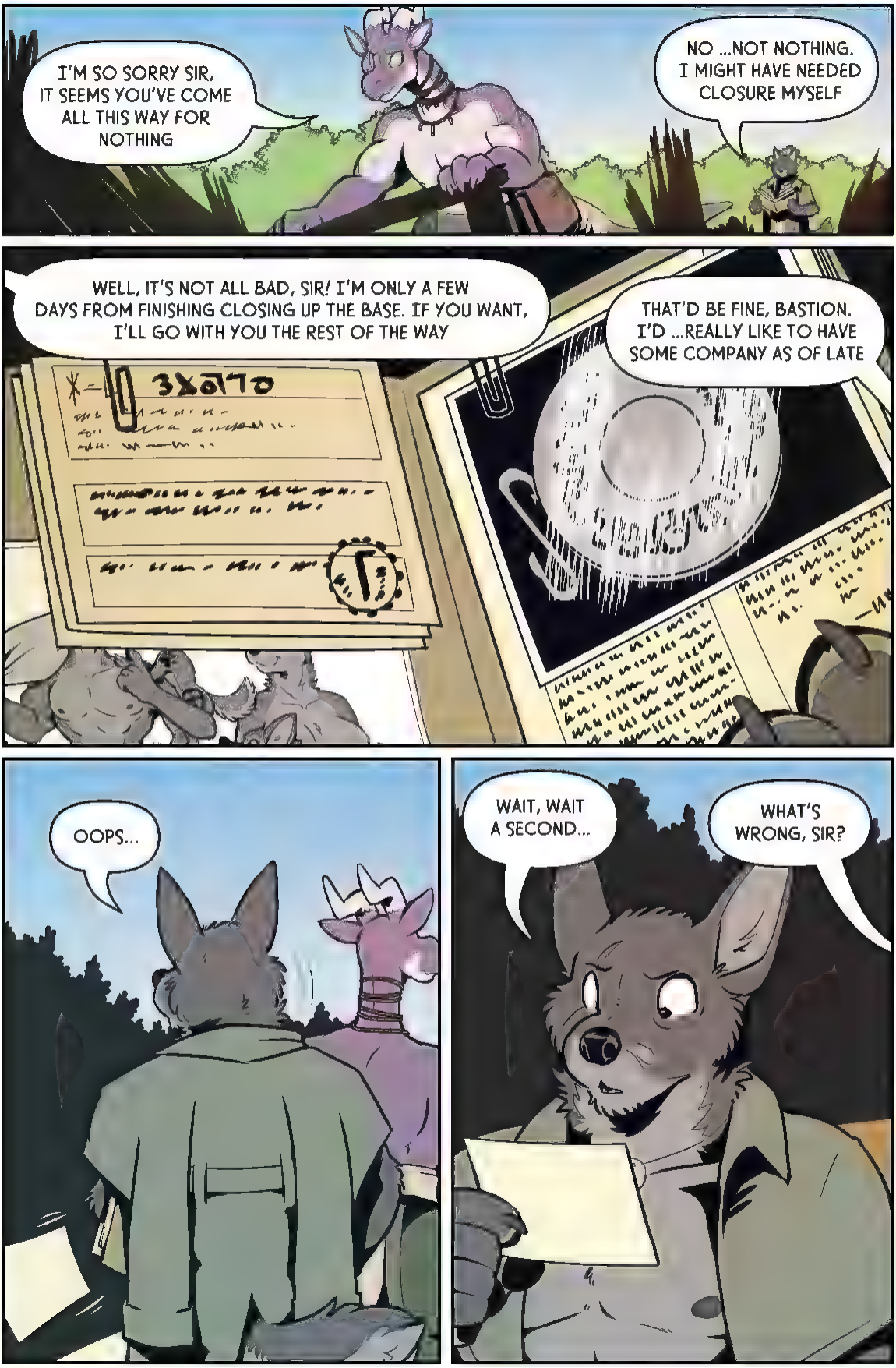
SHOULDN'T MY CLOTHES BE DONE BY NOW? I HAVE A VERY IMPORTANT SPEECH AT THE TOWN CENTER!
BOSS TSERO! YOUR TAG?
I KNOW THERE WERE MORE CLOTHES THAN THIS...
THAT'S TAG ELEVEN... I DOUBLE-CHECKED MYSELF
WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED TO THE SHOULDERS OF THIS JACKET!?
IDEKA!

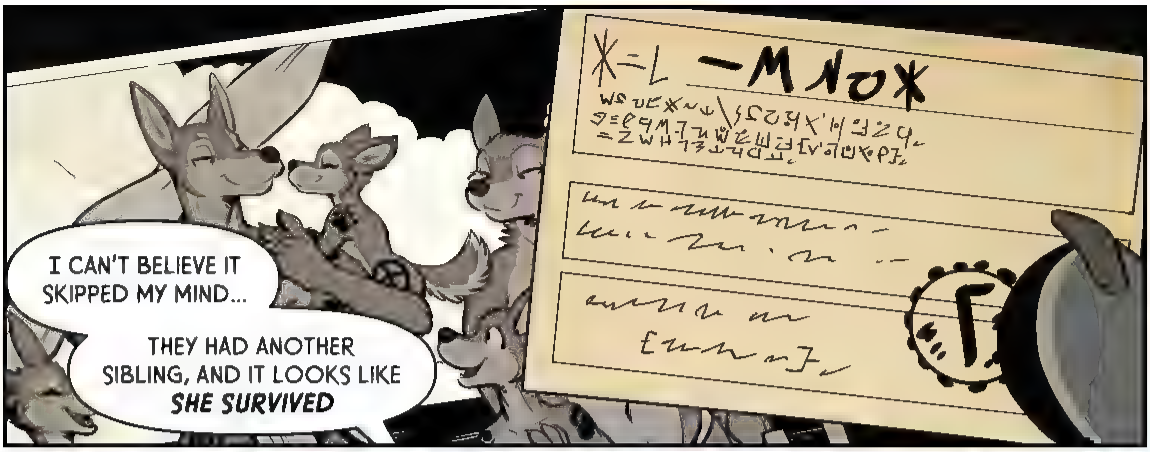
BASTION?
...ROT HAVE ME, GENERAL ORODACHI!

...SO THEN, I VOLUNTEERED FOR CLEANUP DUTY, ABOUT HALF A YEAR AGO NOW... THE CITY WANTED TO REPURPOSE THE BASE, SO I'VE BEEN PACKING UP ALL THE FILES FOR SHIPMENT BACK TO THE CAPITAL
SORRY TO BREAK THE PEACE...
NO NO NO! I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE, I WAS FINALLY STARTING TO GET BORED AGAIN!
WHAT BRINGS YOU TO LUSKA?
I WAS ACTUALLY HEADED *HERE*
YOU HAVEN'T SHIPPED ANY OF THE FILES YET, HAVE YOU?
SOME... WHAT'S THE MATTER?
DO YOU REMEMBER *ANKARO BASE?*
I REMEMBER IT WAS BLOWN TO SMITHEREENS
AT THE TIME, CENTRAL ASSURED US THAT THEY HAD DUPLICATES OF ALL THEIR RECORDS AT COMMAND HQ
THEY DIDN'T?
THE FILES WERE... *INCOMPLETE*
SEVERAL MATTERS HAVE NOT BEEN CONCLUDED BASED ON THOSE FILES-- SUCH AS *SERVING CLOSURE* TO FAMILIES OF WAR CASUALTIES

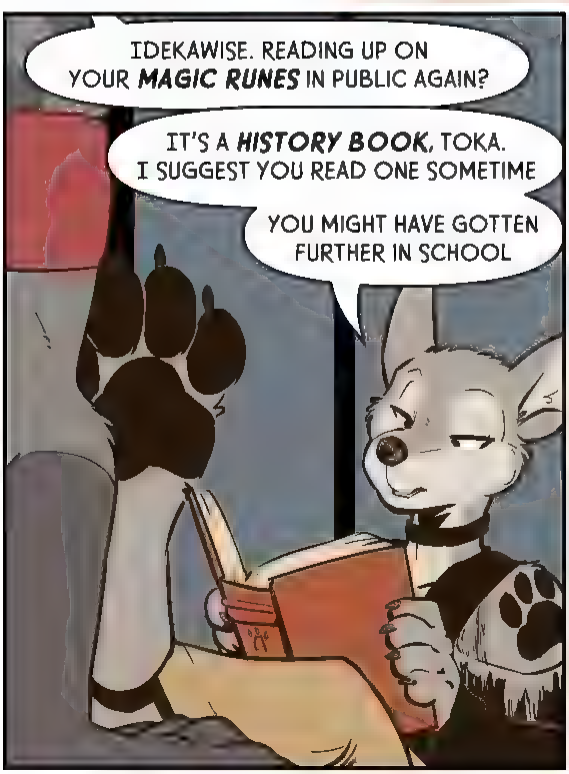
SO THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN DOING THE PAST TWO YEARS--TRYING TO PATCH CENTRAL'S SCREW-UP
OF COURSE I WILL HELP RIGHT AWAY. HOW MANY FILES ARE WE LOOKING FOR?
IN LUSKA? JUST ONE WENT INCOMPLETE ...DO YOU REMEMBER **LURA AND KEXO?**
OH, THOSE POOR KIDS...
THESE DOCUMENTS HAVE WATER DAMAGE!
YES, UNFORTUNATELY THERE WAS A LEAK IN THE BUILDING SOME TIME BEFORE I ARRIVED
THAT'S PART OF WHAT'S BEEN TAKING SO LONG, MAKING SURE THE DOCUMENTS ARE AT LEAST SOMEWHAT DRY...
OH, I'M **SURE** IT'S FINE, SIR. BESIDES, I THINK IT'S A GOOD SIGN THAT A MILITARY BASE CAN FALL INTO DISREPAIR. IT MEANS WE ARE OKAY WITH STANDING DOWN DURING PEACETIME
MAYBE
BUT TO ME IT'S A SIGN THAT ROKO ARE TOO QUICK TO FORGET

SIR! I THINK THIS IS THEIR FILE
LET ME SEE...
ORCHARD STREET, DO YOU KNOW WHERE THAT IS?
I'LL CALL THE CITY
WELL?
THEY'RE DIRECTING ME TO EMERGENCY SERVICES FOR THEIR RECORDS
...WHY?
ROT AND MANGE, THIS POOR FAMILY...


I'M SO SORRY SIR, IT SEEMS YOU'VE COME ALL THIS WAY FOR NOTHING
NO ...NOT NOTHING. I MIGHT HAVE NEEDED CLOSURE MYSELF
WELL, IT'S NOT ALL BAD, SIR! I'M ONLY A FEW DAYS FROM FINISHING CLOSING UP THE BASE. IF YOU WANT, I'LL GO WITH YOU THE REST OF THE WAY
THAT'D BE FINE, BASTION. I'D ...REALLY LIKE TO HAVE SOME COMPANY AS OF LATE
OOPS...
WAIT, WAIT A SECOND...
WHAT'S WRONG, SIR?


I CAN'T BELIEVE IT SKIPPED MY MIND...
THEY HAD ANOTHER SIBLING, AND IT LOOKS LIKE SHE SURVIVED

THAT'S HER, SHE'S BEEN HOVERING AROUND THE MILITARY HISTORY SECTION ALL AFTERNOON.


IDEKAWISE. READING UP ON YOUR MAGIC RUNES IN PUBLIC AGAIN?
IT'S A HISTORY BOOK, TOKA. I SUGGEST YOU READ ONE SOMETIME
YOU MIGHT HAVE GOTTEN FURTHER IN SCHOOL

EASY MISTAKE TO MAKE WHEN YOU INSIST ON FLASHING THOSE TATTOOS OF YOURS TO EVERY ROKO WHO COMES INTO THIS SPACE
I'M CURIOUS, DID YOU BECOME A PEACE OFFICER SPECIFICALLY TO HARASS ME?

YOU KEEP THAT SHACK OF YOURS IN MY JURISDICTION. IF I DIDN'T KNOW BETTER, I'D SAY THAT'S ON PURPOSE
I DON'T HAVE ANYWHERE BETTER TO GO
YOU CAN HAVE AN APARTMENT, IDEKA. THE CITY JUST GIVES THEM OUT
I REFUSE
ANY APARTMENT WOULD TELL ME TO COVER UP, TOO. IN MY OWN LIVING SPACE
IF YOU KNOW, YOU CAN'T FEIGN IGNORANCE!
I WAS CALLED IN HERE BECAUSE OF YOUR TATTOOS, AGAIN. EVERY ESTABLISHMENT YOU ENTER WANTS YOU GONE, AND YOU KNOW WHY
YOU REVEL IN BEING SEEN AS A HAZARD
THEY'RE A PERMANENT PART OF MY BODY, TOKA
SO UNTIL THE CITY COUNCIL MAKES IT AN ACTUAL LAW THAT MY BODY, SPECIFICALLY, IS MORE ILLEGAL THAN ANYONE ELSE'S, I WILL NOT COVER MY TATTOOS ON PURPOSE
DON'T PRETEND THIS IS ABOUT DISCRIMINATION!
THEN EITHER LEAVE ME ALONE OR CITE SOMETHING I DID WRONG, STATUTE AND PARAGRAPH

... YOU KNOW, I RECEIVED WORD THIS MORNING FROM EAST END LAUNDRY SERVICES
THEY SAID THAT BOSS TSERO IS MISSING HER BEST CLOTHES. AND YOU WERE THERE THIS MORNING, DEMANDING YOUR LAUNDRY BE PULLED PREMATURELY
I WAS
AND THERE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN SOME SORT OF MIX-UP WITH THE TAGS. THEY THINK THEY GAVE YOU TSERO'S LAUNDRY
A MISTAKE ON THEIR PART, BUT I DON'T THINK MISTAKES ARE ILLEGAL
YOU'RE ABOUT TSERO'S SIZE, AREN'T YOU? HER DESCRIPTION MATCHES WHAT YOU'RE WEARING, MINUS THE HOLES--THAT'S THEFT
CLOTHES ARE CLASSIFIED AS PUBLIC GOODS, THEY DON'T BELONG TO ANYONE
UNLESS THEY'RE REGISTERED AS PERSONAL PROPERTY, LIKE THAT BOOK OF YOURS. PERHAPS I SHOULD HAVE YOU STRIPPED TO CHECK THOSE CLOTHES FOR MARKINGS
ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO DEMAND I STRIP AFTER TELLING ME I'M NOT WEARING ENOUGH CLOTHING?
...BESIDES, I ALREADY TORE THEM OFF

... YOU KNOW, I RECEIVED WORD THIS MORNING FROM EAST END LAUNDRY SERVICES
THEY SAID THAT BOSS TSERO IS MISSING HER BEST CLOTHES. AND YOU WERE THERE THIS MORNING, DEMANDING YOUR LAUNDRY BE PULLED PREMATURELY
I WAS
AND THERE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN SOME SORT OF MIX-UP WITH THE TAGS. THEY THINK THEY GAVE YOU TSERO'S LAUNDRY
A MISTAKE ON THEIR PART, BUT I DON'T THINK MISTAKES ARE ILLEGAL
YOU'RE ABOUT TSERO'S SIZE, AREN'T YOU? HER DESCRIPTION MATCHES WHAT YOU'RE WEARING, MINUS THE HOLES--THAT'S THEFT
CLOTHES ARE CLASSIFIED AS PUBLIC GOODS, THEY DON'T BELONG TO ANYONE
UNLESS THEY'RE REGISTERED AS PERSONAL PROPERTY, LIKE THAT BOOK OF YOURS. PERHAPS I SHOULD HAVE YOU STRIPPED TO CHECK THOSE CLOTHES FOR MARKINGS
ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO DEMAND I STRIP AFTER TELLING ME I'M NOT WEARING ENOUGH CLOTHING?
. BESIDES, I ALREADY TORE THEM OFF

YOU DO THIS TO MOCK ME!
THEN END IT BY CATCHING ME DOING SOMETHING ILLEGAL!
...I KNOW THIS IS ABOUT THE INCIDENT, IDEKA
THE INCIDENT, LIKE YOU NEED TO TALK IN EUPHEMISMS..
IF YOU WANT TO BE RID OF THE UNCERTAINTY THEN DROP THE DEFIANT ATTITUDE AND TRUSTBOND WITH ME
YOU DON'T HAVE TO LIVE THIS WAY
YOU CAN BE HAPPY

TRUSTBONDING WITH ANYONE IN THIS ROT-BEFALLEN CITY, ESPECIALLY YOU, MEANS ACCEPTING YOUR VERSION OF EVENTS-- THAT YOU BELIEVE MY PARENTS AND MY SIBLINGS WERE EVIL AND THEIR LIVES WORTHLESS
I WILL NEVER MAKE THAT EXCHANGE
SO YOU'RE GOING TO LIVE IN SQUALOR ON PRINCIPLE? OR JUST BECAUSE YOUR PARENTS SCREWED YOU UP?
TAKE ME IN FOR THAT, I DARE YOU
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO PROVE?
THAT YOU'RE TOO GOOD TO TRUSTBOND WITH ANYONE?
I DON'T KNOW IF I'M BETTER THAN EVERYONE. BUT I AM, AT THE VERY LEAST...
BETTER
THAN
YOU

...YOU HAVE THIRTY MINUTES TO COVER UP OR LEAVE THE ARCHIVE. UNLESS YOU REALLY DO WANT TO TAKE THIS IN FRONT OF A MEDIATOR
WHEN YOU FORCE ME AND NO SOONER

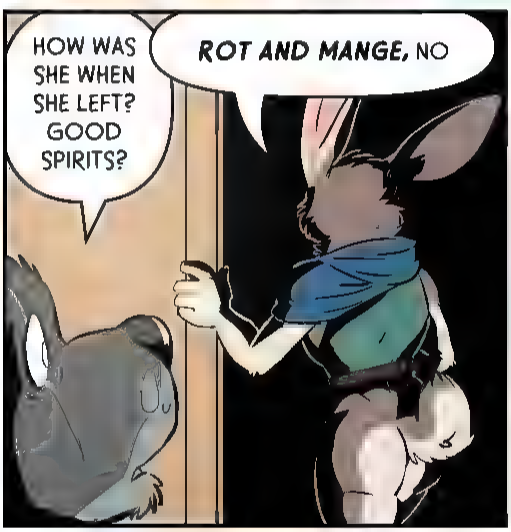
THEY USE THIS PLACE FOR MENTAL HEALTH?
PLEASE, FEEL FREE TO CRITICIZE WITHIN EARSHOT

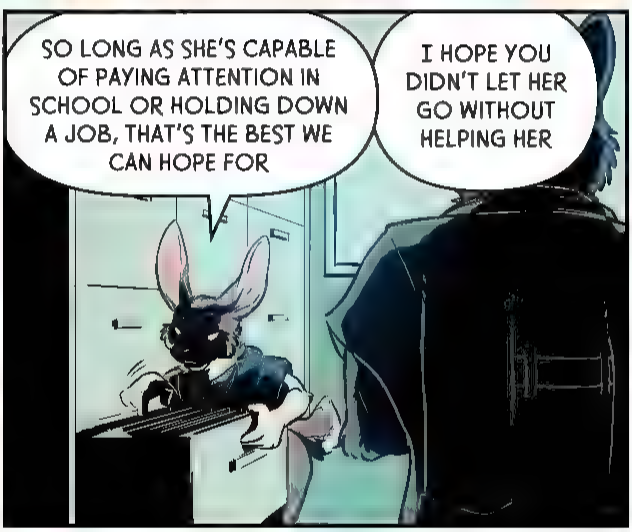
COUNSELOR SARKAKAWAI
COLONEL BASTION, AND THIS IS GENERAL ORODACHI. NO CRITICISM ON YOU, MISS SARKA, ONLY YOU SEEM TO BE SITUATED ACROSS THE STREET FROM LOUD WORKSHOPS

NOT ALL OF US GET A NICE ONE-STORY BUILDING IN THE MIDDLE OF UNSPOILED VIRGIN MEADOWS. BESIDES, WE GET HEAVY SNOWS IN THE WINTER. ONE CAN GET TRAPPED IN RURAL LOCATIONS AND THAT'S NOT GOOD FOR RECOVERY.
SO LONG AS THERE ARE POSITIVES!

NOW LET'S SEE--TWO EX-MILITARY, HIGH RANK. YOU LIKELY HAD YOUR PICK OF TRAUMA CENTERS FOR THERAPY ALREADY, SO YOU'RE HERE TO SEE ME ABOUT ONE OF MY PATIENTS
GIVEN THE FOLDER IN YOUR HAND HAS **EMERGENCY SERVICES** LETTERHEAD, I'LL WAGER IT'S NOT A SOLDIER BUDDY BUT A VICTIM OF A MORE LOCAL TRAGEDY, AM I GETTING CLOSE?

IDE--
--***IDEKAWISE***, DAMMIT I SHOULD HAVE GUESSED
I KNEW ***SOMEONE*** WOULD ASK ABOUT HER SOMEDAY
LET ME FETCH YOU HER FILE


HOW WAS SHE WHEN SHE LEFT? GOOD SPIRITS?
ROT AND MANGE, NO


SO LONG AS SHE'S CAPABLE OF PAYING ATTENTION IN SCHOOL OR HOLDING DOWN A JOB, THAT'S THE BEST WE CAN HOPE FOR
I HOPE YOU DIDN'T LET HER GO WITHOUT HELPING HER

IF SHE WOULD LET US
SHE'S MISSED HER FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS EVER SINCE SHE LEFT
YOU DON'T MAKE HER ATTEND?

ME AND WHAT ARMY? I'M NOT GIVEN RESOURCES TO TRACK DOWN PATIENTS, I JUST WAIT UNTIL THEY GET IN SUFFICIENT TROUBLE TO MAKE IT THE PEACE OFFICER'S JOB TO BRING THEM BACK

SHE DIDN'T TRUSTBOND WITH ANYONE?
STOP ME IF I'M WRONG, BUT I BELIEVE THE SOCIETY CLASSIFIES STATE-ENFORCED TRUSTBONDING AS EXTREMELY ILLEGAL
I'M NOT SAYING FORCE... BUT MOTIVATING TRUSTBONDING IS PART OF YOUR JOB, ISN'T IT?
NONE OF YOUR STAFF WAS WILLING TO MEET HER EVEN HALFWAY?
THAT WOULD DEPEND ON IDEKA'S DECISION, BUT SHE HOLDS TO MAGIC UNAMBIGUOUSLY AS A SOURCE OF GOOD
IF SHE WISHED TO HEAL, THEN SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN WILLING TO LET GO
MISS SARKA, MY CONCERN HERE IS THAT WHEN WE FIND IDEKA, SHE IS ALIVE AND HEALTHY AND OF SOUND MIND
I DON'T CARE ABOUT THIS REGION'S OPINIONS ON MAGIC. I CARE IF SHE'S BECOME A DELINQUENT IN THE INTERVENING YEARS, BECAUSE I'D MUCH RATHER DELIVER THE NEWS TO SOMEONE WHO STILL HAS THE CAPACITY TO GRIEVE PROPERLY
THEN I HOPE YOU'RE READY FOR DISAPPOINTMENT
BAMF

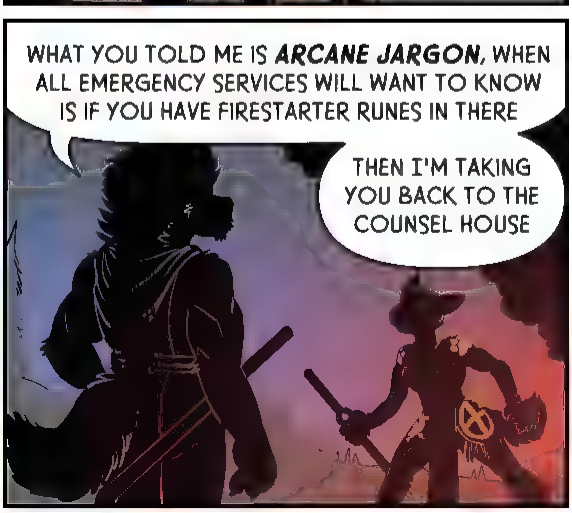
N-NO!
M-MY PHOTOGRAPHS!
WHERE ARE MY PHOTOGRAPHS?!
IDEKA...
YOU!
THERE'S NO POINT GOING IN THERE, EMERGENCY SERVICES ARE ON THEIR WAY
AWFULLY CONVENIENT YOU HAPPENED BY, ISN'T IT?!

I WAS COMING BY TO DROP OFF SOME EXTRA CLOTHES, SINCE YOU WERE CLEARLY HURTING
I KNOW YOU WANT TO MAKE ME THE BAD GUY HERE, BUT I'M NOT PITILESS

SO JUST TELL ME OUTRIGHT, IDEKA... DID YOU HAVE ANY FIRESTARTER RUNES IN YOUR HOUSE?
THAT'S NOT HOW RUNES WORK!

AND YOU KNOW THAT'S NOT HOW RUNES WORK! YOU ALL TREAT THEM AS INHERENTLY HAZARDOUS BUT THEY CAN'T SPONTANEOUSLY CREATE EFFECTS WITHOUT A CASTER
THIS ISN'T ABOUT THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF--
LIKE MANGE IT ISN'T! YOU'RE SUGGESTING SOMETHING IMPOSSIBLE HAPPENED!
THERE'S BEEN MANY REPORTS OF SPONTANEOUS ERUPTIONS OF MAGIC--
AND IF YOU EVER DID RESEARCH INSTEAD OF ASSUMING THAT MAGIC IS UNKNOWABLE, THEN YOU'D KNOW ALL THAT MEANS IS THAT THE CASTER WAS NOT IDENTIFIED
SO I WILL ASK YOU AGAIN, TOKA, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I'M HERE TO SEIZE THIS
DON'T YOU DARE!


WHAT YOU TOLD ME IS ARCANE JARGON, WHEN ALL EMERGENCY SERVICES WILL WANT TO KNOW IS IF YOU HAVE FIRESTARTER RUNES IN THERE
THEN I'M TAKING YOU BACK TO THE COUNSEL HOUSE

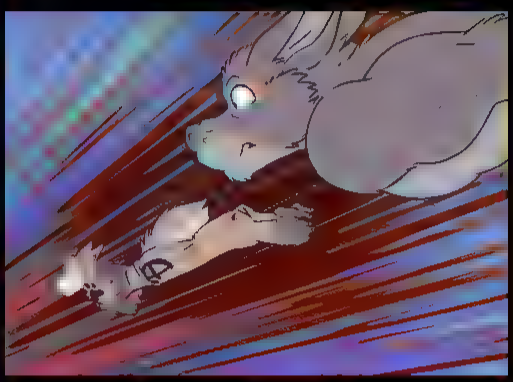
STAND ASIDE
WHAT, SO YOU CAN BURN THE LAST THING MY PARENTS LEFT ME?!
IF YOU FORCE MY HAND

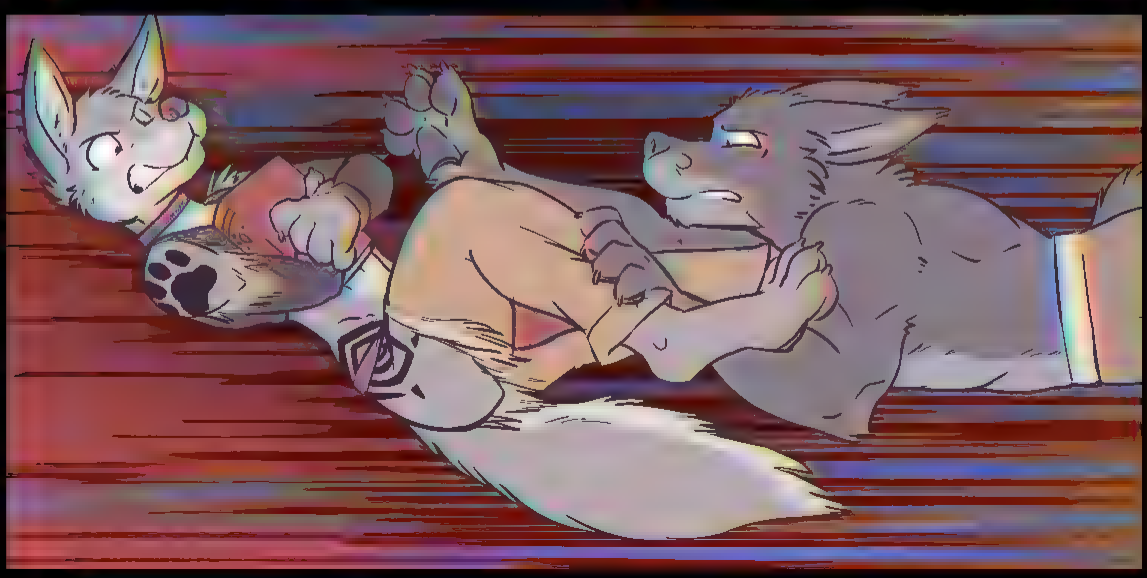
ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO COMMIT HOMICIDE OVER A BOOK?
YES!

WHY, TOKA? WHY GO TO THESE LENGTHS TO RUIN ME?
THAT BOOK IS POISONING YOUR MIND
YOU NEED TO RID YOURSELF OF IT, OF YOUR PAST, IF YOU EVER WANT TO BE WHOLE AGAIN
YOU NEED TO SEE THAT!
...
YOU LITERALLY CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT IT'S LIKE TO SEE THROUGH MY EYES, CAN YOU?
IDEKAWISE?
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

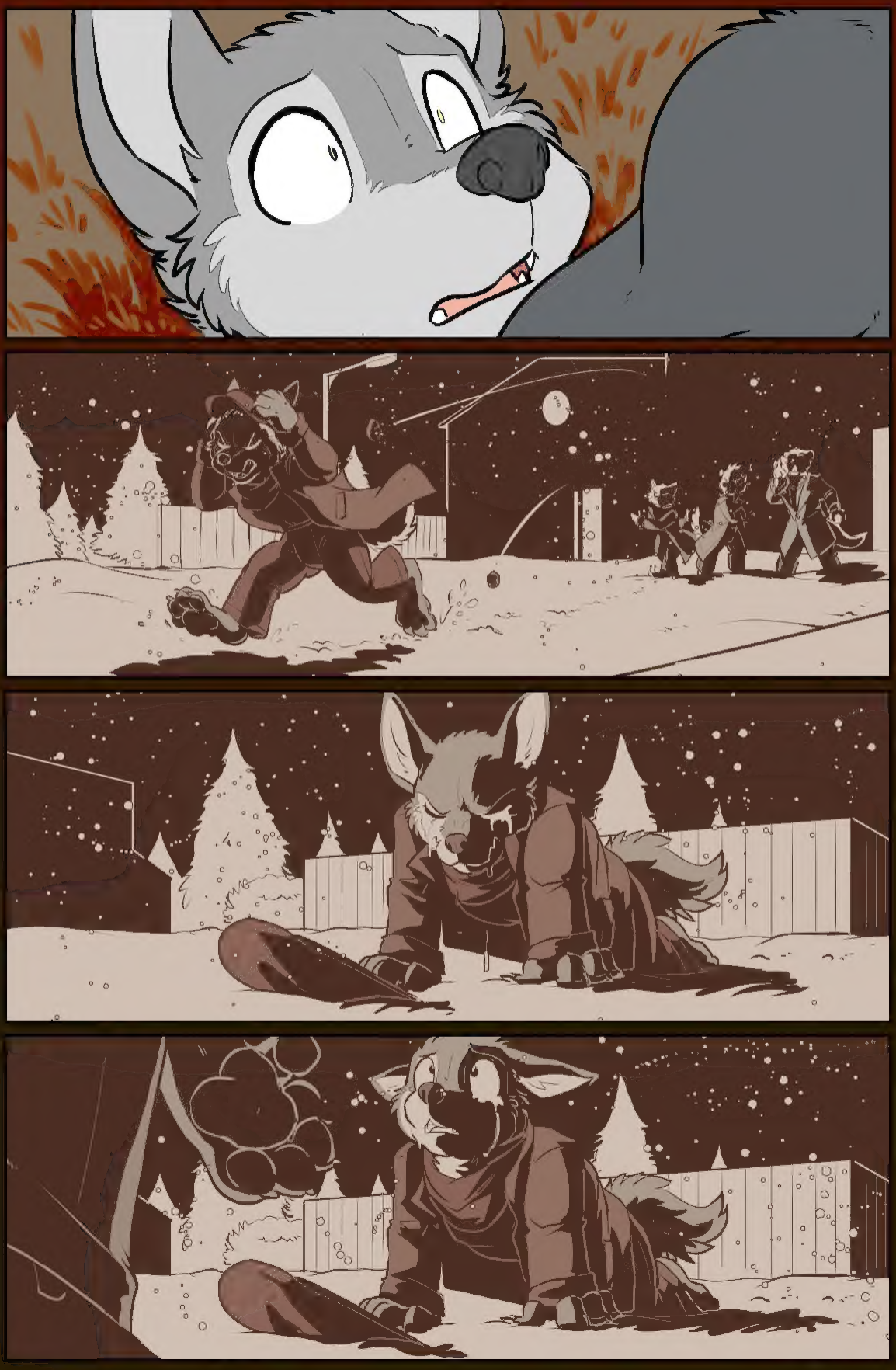
MILITARY?! TOKA, I'VE ALWAYS SUSPECTED YOU WERE LOW, BUT YOU CALLED IN THE MILITARY TO ARREST ME?
I'VE NEVER SEEN THESE TWO--
ROT! SHE'S GOING TO DISAPPEAR ENTIRELY! WE NEED TO GET SEARCH PARTIES SPREAD OUT, THERE'S A HUNDRED MILES TO COVER!
IDEKA!
BAMF
THAT'S HER, I TAKE IT...
...SIR? WHAT'S THAT?

BAMF
IDEKA STOP!
I JUST WANT TO TALK!
THAT'S ALL ANYONE EVER WANTS TO DO!
IDEKA! PLEASE!





LET GO OF ME!
IDEKA, LET ME HELP YOU!
I'M NOT TRUSTBONDING WITH YOU!
I'M NOT ASKING YOU TO TRUSTBOND WITH ME!
I'M ASKING IF YOU RECOGNIZE ME



LIEUTENANT ORODACHI?!
AFTER EVERYTHING YOU DID, AFTER EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED, YOU COME BACK NOW?!
WHY DID YOU TAKE SO LONG?
CONTINUED...